

Information Governance

08 September 2020

Our Ref: RFI 35311

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Patients Living in Cold Homes**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for information relating to above which you requested on 4 August 2020. You will be aware from my previous email that due to the Covid- 19 Pandemic the Information Governance Service was suspended as staff were redeployed. Thank you for your patience and forbearance during the ensuing delay.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Nursing, Primary Care & Older People Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

If you are unhappy as to how this request has been handled, you have the right to seek a review within the Trust in the first instance. You should write to the Information Governance Department, Lough House, Ards Community Hospital (informationgovernance@setrust.hscni.net) within two months of the date of this response and your complaint will be considered and a response provided, within 20 working days of receipt.

If, after receiving a response, you remain unhappy, you can refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner at The Information Commissioner's Office –Northern Ireland, 3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place, Belfast, BT7 2JB. It is important to note that if you refer any matter to the Information Commissioner, you will need to show evidence of having gone through the Trust's internal review procedure to try to resolve the matter with the Trust in the first instance.

If you have any queries about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Manning
Information Governance Assistant

Q1. Does South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust have a strategy, policies or procedures in place to address the health consequences for patients of living in cold homes?

A1. The Trust does not have a specific strategy, policies or procedures in place to address the health consequences for patients of living in cold homes; however, as part of a holistic assessment of need, should it emerge that there are heating issues, a referral would be made to partner voluntary organisations, for example, Age NI, Advice NI or Citizens Advice Bureau. These schemes have trained advisers who will provide advice and support regarding benefits and refer where appropriate to the Warm Homes Scheme.

Q2. Does South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust have procedures or policies in place to ensure health and social care practitioners assess the heating needs of their patients? If so, does the Trust record or audit compliance with these procedures or policies?

A2. The NI Single Assessment Tool is used to assess patient's needs. This assessment tool addresses a number of domains including the environment the patient lives in. It is based on the consent and information provided by the individual.
The Trust audits compliance with the assessment process and procedure through professional supervision.

Q3. Does South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust have procedures or policies in place to ensure that, when a patient is discharged from a health or social care setting, an assessment is carried out into whether they are likely to be vulnerable to the cold and if action is needed to make their home warm enough for them to return to? If so, does the Trust record or audit compliance with these procedures or policies?

A3. The NI Single Assessment Tool is used to assess patient's needs. This assessment tool addresses a number of domains including the environment the patient lives in. It is based on the consent and information provided by the individual
Where assessment indicates it necessary, a referral will be made to Age NI, Advice NI, or Citizens Advice Bureau. These schemes have trained advisers who will provide advice and support regarding benefits and refer where appropriate to the Warm Homes Scheme to ensure the person has access to the necessary supports to ensure their home is warm.
This advice and guidance and the outcomes is not monitored by the Trust, as it is not a service provided directly by the Trust